

## SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

**HON. JAMES A. BARCIA**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 27, 1999*

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2392, the Small Business Innovation Research Program Reauthorization Act of 1999. Working with our colleagues on the Small Business Committee, we have crafted an authorization bill, which preserves the programs strengths. In addition, H.R. 2392 provides for a study of the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. It is our hope to incorporate the results and findings of this study in the next reauthorization cycle.

The SBIR program is an important element in making the unique capabilities of small high-tech business available to the Federal government. Initiated in 1982, the SBIR program was built upon an existing NSF pilot program and now includes the ten federal agencies with the largest external research budgets. When the program was conceived, it was clear that small business had much to offer federal agencies, but were not receiving a proportional share of federal research contracts. In essence, they were shut-out of the federal research awards process. Through the SBIR we have guaranteed that at least 2.5% of agencies' external research dollars are awarded to small businesses. This set aside has created progress towards achieving the SBIR programs two major goals; providing small high-tech businesses the opportunity to meet federal research needs and increasing the number of technology based commercial products developed by small business.

As in any program, however, there is room for improvement. We need to ensure that an increasing percentage of SBIR winners go on to be commercial successes. And we need to build a better record in helping the best SBIR participants join the ranks of federal contractors. I will continue to work with my colleagues to address both of these concerns.

In closing, I would like to say that it has been a pleasure working with Chairman SENBRENNER, Chairwoman MORELLA, and Ranking Member HALL as well as our colleagues on the Small Business Committee in developing this consensus legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2392.

LIFE AND TIMES OF OSEOLA McCARTY

**HON. RONNIE SHOWS**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 28, 1999*

Mr. SHOWS. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to take a minute to tell my fellow colleagues and the American People about Oseola McCarty. Ms. McCarty recently passed away and it is important that we pause to remember this remarkable Mississippian and American.

Oseola McCarty spent her life washing and ironing the clothes of others in Hattiesburg,

Mississippi. Her life was one of meager and simple means concerning the material things many deem important. Her spirit and faith, though, was large and full. Her capacity to give and care and love exceeded all boundaries. Ms. McCarty was a great American and we all need to know and learn from her story.

The Bible teaches us about the widow's mite; that lady who gave less than others but all she had and was called great for her more profound sacrifice. Friends, Ms. McCarty gave us all the widow's mite.

Her meager income over the years provided just enough for her to put away a little in savings each month. Over these 75 years this grew and in 1995 she gave the University of Southern Mississippi \$150,000 to help the poor go to school. This was a gift to all of us. Certainly to those who have and will benefit from a college education. But also Ms. McCarty gave us all the gift of love and generosity. She taught us that integrity in life and belief in God and others, when put into action, changes lives.

I am indebted to Oseola McCarty for her example. My Alma Mater, the University of Southern Mississippi, is indebted to her for her gift and inspiration. And everyone, all of us, is indebted to Ms. McCarty because she helped remind us that we all matter and what we do matters to all.

Many beautiful and great words will be said the next several days about Ms. McCarty. And, great things should be said. But, let's honor her the way she would want . . . let's give ourselves. Let's give to others, like Ms. McCarty.

## PROGRESS IN THE GAMBIA

**HON. EARL F. HILLIARD**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 28, 1999*

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my satisfaction with the course of certain events relating to The Gambia, in West Africa. Some of our colleagues may, or may not, be aware that due to the tireless efforts of President Yahya Jammeh, The Gambia continues to play a pivotal role in peacemaking and peacekeeping. Specifically, The Gambia has participated in peace efforts in three regions of conflict of West Africa—Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, and the Casamance region of Senegal.

During the 21st summit of the sixteen-member Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), hosted by The Gambia in October 1998, President Jammeh was successful in bringing the two protagonists in the Guinea-Bissau conflict to the negotiating table for their first face-to-face meeting since fighting erupted earlier that year. Although the peace accord, which was signed by Guinea-Bissau President Joao Bernard Vieira and rebel leader Ansumane Mane was subsequently broken, President Jammeh continued to work toward a peaceful resolution of the conflict. For his efforts, President Jammeh was congratulated by other heads of state for being the first leader in the sub-region to send a delegation in search of a peace resolution to the crisis.

Similarly, in the conflict in Sierra Leone between President Kabbah and the Revolu-

tionary United Front (RUF), led by Foday Sankoh, Gambian President Jammeh was the first leader to make an international offer to mediate, and urge for peace in the country, as well as the entire sub-region. In June 1999, Banjul was again the scene of peace negotiations when the Senegalese government and separatist rebels from the Casamance province accepted President Jammeh's offer to facilitate peace in the troubled province.

Gambian President Yahya Jammeh has offered all possible assistance in order to facilitate the permanent return of peace to the West African region. On the occasion of President Jammeh's first visit to the United States as a head of state, I would like my colleagues to join me in honoring and commending President Jammeh for his commitment to peace and unity in West Africa.

## THE HASS AVOCADO PROMOTION, RESEARCH AND INFORMATION ACT

**HON. GARY A. CONDIT**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 28, 1999*

Mr. CONDIT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support for legislation offered with Representative KEN CALVERT to create a new national promotion program for Hass avocados. This bill, the Hass Avocado Promotion, Research and Information Act, provides a vehicle for both domestic producers and importers to work together to increase the demand for avocados.

The California avocado industry has benefited from an innovative, state grower-funded program administered by the California Avocado Commission. The means that 6000 Hass avocado growers in California currently assess themselves to pay for the national promotion of avocados. In recent years, however, imports are supplying an increasing share of the U.S. consumer market. In 1998, for example, import levels reached 100 million pounds, an amount equal to nearly one-third the size of U.S. avocado production. Given this trend, Congress should provide a mechanism for importers to share in the state commission's efforts. This bill will do just that, by providing tools to expand consumer markets for avocados at a time when supply is increasing.

This legislation is tailored to fit the special characteristics of Hass Avocado production, which is unique to California and several foreign countries. The creation of a national checkoff at no cost to the nation's taxpayers will allow US avocado growers and importers to fund and operate a coordinated marketing effort. This bill is designed to: (1) create a industry-based, international board to administer the program; (2) authorize promotion, research, and educational activities; (3) direct the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct a referendum 60 days prior to implementation of the program; and (4) designate the initial rate of assessment on Hass avocados at 2.5 cents per pound, capped at five cents per pound. In addition to promotional and consumer information, this legislation allows producers to research issues important to avocado production and sales, such as market development, food safety, avocado uses, quality, and nutritional value.